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CC:
Subject: Blog from Energy In Depth (Gas Industry) CNN, Dazed by Dimock, Falls Short at Fact Checking

http://www.northcentralpa.com/feeditem/2012-02-09_updatecnn-dazed-dimock-falls-short-fact-checking

*UPDATE*CNN, Dazed by Dimock, Falls Short at Fact Checking
By Feed: Energy In Depth - Northeast Marcellus Initiative
in

Gas Industry

February 9, 2012

UPDATE (see bottom of page)

National media outlets are supposed to be objective, removing personal views from stories, fact-checking statements and getting the opinions of multiple stakeholders to promote accuracy in reporting. Unfortunately, this doesn't always happen, and it seems Dimock, Pa. never gets a fair shake. In Dimock, it seems coverage always perpetuates the sensationalism advanced by the anti-natural gas community instead of the facts at hand. The latest example is brought to us by no less a network than CNN. The network aired a bunk piece which completely skews the situation in Dimock by essentially promoting a commercial for the Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition (GDAC) using the CNN brand.

The network aired this piece on its IReport platform. This program allows users to upload videos which are occasionally given national attention when CNN producers feature them on the site's home page. That is exactly what happened here. What follows, is a situation where journalistic standards were either completely ignored, or purposely avoided.

Enter The Marcellus Shale Reality Tour Part 3 submitted by Scott Cannon of GDAC, the latest, and greatest, misinformation masterpiece from the anti-natural gas community. Because CNN has provided Cannon a national outlet, with no editorial oversight, we had to take a closer look at this glorified advertisement.

GDAC Sets the Trap That Caught CNN

The real issue here lies with CNN not GDAC. We expect as much from GDAC. We tried pointing out the significant errors in this story but it seems to have fallen of deaf ears. After calling and speaking with a few people who confirmed the story was never fact checked, CNN added a tiny black box that says not vetted by CNN. This is the corrective action they feel is appropriate for perpetuating a narrative that scars a small bucolic town. Fair enough, at least your honest.

It seems the IReport producer who endorsed this story, Germain Perez (Elchueco), didn't know where to look for factual information or employed bad judgement. Whatever the scenario, the result remains that CNN's logo is now plastered all over something that completely whiffs at meeting the standards of journalism. Unless of course, those standards center around perpetuating claims that are unsupported by any information at hand.

Regardless, a community continues to be torn apart due to irresponsible journalism. While this producer likely thought he was making a seemingly inconsequential decision, that alternate reality is far from the truth. Rather, his hapless approval continues the trend of trashing Dimock and the 1,485, or so, residents who call it home and are not suing Cabot.

CNN Fooled by the Roos Ruse

Three years ago DEP and Cabot agreed on a consent order (found here) after methane migration had occurred. Cabot contends this is naturally occurring and additional studies have confirmed this.

On to Susan Roos, the woman in the video. She is one of the litigants who never agreed to the order and is currently suing Cabot Oil & Gas. Under the terms of the order Cabot agreed to install water treatment systems and potable water

supplies. Additionally, Cabot agreed to pay two and a half times the assessed value of each home listed in the consent decree.

Cabot has offered and installed water treatment systems in some of the litigants' homes. These treatment systems have successfully removed methane and other natural occurring substances which have improved the quality of the water tremendously. Some say their water is now better than before Cabot arrived. However, there are residents, including Ms. Roos, who continue to refuse the system or any other assistance for that matter. They claim their water is contaminated yet offer no proof. Instead of working with their community, and accepting Cabot's assistance, they pick up the phone and call Josh Fox. Of course, the video mentions none of this, nor does it mention this group of remaining litigants is seeking a very large settlement; somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100 million.

Here are a few points to consider that the video doesn't address:

Mrs. Roos claims her well is polluted by "so much more than methane": We would like proof. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection declared methane migration occurred. Over 10,000 water samples conducted show no indication of "so much more than that". This was confirmed by a Duke University study. None of this is mentioned in the video. The reality, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has already determined Mrs. Roos' water does not exceed primary drinking water standards. While she does have higher levels of iron and manganese in her water, these naturally occurring materials only have secondary drinking water standards. According to U.S. EPA, secondary drinking water standards are for aesthetic purposes (color and taste) as they don't pose a threat to human health. Another key fact left out is that iron and manganese are naturally occurring in this part of Pennsylvania. Yet another, Cabot used neither during the development process.

What exactly is the EPA doing in Dimock? According to Ms. Roos they are "testing for 700 chemicals". A simple reading of the Cabot press release (found [here](#)) would raise questions on this matter. U.S. EPA has explained that four residents have elevated levels of manganese and sodium and "data gaps" required additional testing. The contaminants in question are arsenic, manganese, sodium according to the EPA toxicologist .

The methane present in Mrs. Roos water has been tested and is Biogenic/microbial gas. This is subsurface shallow gas commonly found near swamps and marshlands throughout Pennsylvania. It is not the same as natural gas methane, which is commonly referred to as thermogenic. Isotope tests confirming this have been performed with the results confirmed by DEP. The Graph below is a sample of this test and can be found on Cabot's surveys webpage.

Roos Chart Biogenic vs. Thermogenic

"Our lawyers have an expert who has found barium, arsenic, and strontium": Once again, where is the proof? I don't know who this expert is, nor does anyone else, as the litigants refuse to share their water data. Cabot's data shows none of these things. Cabot's data was collected with DEP and tested by state certified laboratories, or experts certified by the state. Also, barium and arsenic, unfortunately, are common in this part of the state. In fact, DEP shows barium since the 80's and USGS has even noted high levels of arsenic in the area well before natural gas development.

"Cabot does not want to reveal its findings of what was in the well": This, too, is false. Cabot has disclosed its data to DEP and the public through its website and [FracFocus.org](#), a online registry for hydraulic fracturing fluids.

"A couple of trucks fell down into the creek": Not quite. Dimock is a small place and Cabot knows its subcontractors well. There was never a single report of "trucks falling into the creek" registered with Cabot, DEP, local towing facilities, or local or state police. If an industrial truck falls into a creek in a small town, let alone a couple of them, there would be some documentation and someone would likely be fired. The only "truck falling into a creek" that anyone is aware of was a single fuel truck completely unrelated to natural gas development.

"The people that are for Cabot, the Enough Already, are trying to get petitions to have EPA banned, not allowed to check them, and I don't see what the problem is, if the well's are clean they should want to have them checked.": That's one perspective. The other is over 10,000 pages of data provided to EPA that show the wells are clean. The community is upset as they view the actions of the litigants as detrimental to their town and livelihoods. They are tired of having their town's reputation drug through the mud by the press for the benefit of a small group of litigants. You can see this first-hand when the Binghamton Mayor showed up to offer water deliveries (2:52).

Nicole Jacobs is listed as a "Paid Energy In Depth lobbyist". Wow. This couldn't be farther from the truth. Nicole is a field director for our program. In this capacity she writes blogs and attends meetings in communities to write those blogs. Nicole has never been a lobbyist for us or anyone else. She does not advocate for policies with state or federal elected officials. The only truth here is that she is paid. The community asked her to join them for this event as she knows these folks. She agreed. This gross mischaracterization is border-line libel.

"The Enough Already Group gets paid off": Wow. Not true. These folks are independent of Cabot. They do share one thing in common with Ms. Roos, some of them have leases with Cabot, as do 90% of the population of Susquehanna County.

CNN Leaves Many Questions Unanswered:

Each of the following questions demonstrate CNN's failure to provide quality information to its viewers:

Concerning the goats and nearby stream why did the director choose to leave out the mounds of goat and chicken manure along side the stream? There's a lot of methane there too!

What did these goats die of exactly and where are tests to prove this, or at the very least veterinary records recounting their treatment or odd symptoms.

Is Mrs. Roos really unable to sell her home? Has she ever tried to? Later in the video, Mrs. Roos says "I don't want to buy another house...so we're going to move to Maine. We definitely deserve more then they were trying to give us." These things don't mesh with other statements she has made in the past.

Why did this video fail to include anything about the royalties Mrs. Roos currently receives from the Ratzel Unit?

How is Enough Already Cabot's PR group? This is a citizen lead organization of Susquehanna residents trying to stand up against the negative publicity Dimock has received. For more information on Enough is Enough (current name) click [here](#).

It's like an industrial park? Take a look at this picture below. It was taken near Carter Rd. right inside the 9-square mile moratorium zone. It is the essence of what natural gas development actually looks like. One would have to drive around for awhile before finding another rig like the one pictured here. The producing wells are even harder to find as they disappear into the landscape.

Beautiful Dimock, PA, Landscape

Can you find the Industrial Zone?

CNN Fails Again, Or Was It Deliberate?

CNN failed miserably here in presenting unbiased information about the situation in Dimock. Did it do so on purpose? The only one who can answer that is CNN. What we know is that CNN made a clarification to this post, and its veracity, and then removed it after we informed them of these, and similar, concerns. We also know the producer has endorsed other Scott Cannon "documentaries". Finally, the final thirty seconds is nothing more than an advertisement for GDAC.

Only time will tell if they continue to allow this nonsense to remain uncorrected. For those looking for more truth about Dimock please check out: [Dimock the Full Story](#), [Further Review of the Data in Dimock Shows Room For EPA Error](#), [EPA's Comedy of Errors](#), [Dimock Proud "Enough is Enough."](#)

Lastly, check out this video from independent hydrologist Brian Oram – an expert on Pennsylvania's water especially in Susquehanna County. He explains the facts about water in Dimock and northeastern Pennsylvania. It's somewhat lengthy but well worth watching.

Are you listening, CNN? You might learn something!

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UPDATE (Feb 10, 9:20 a.m. ET) Cabot Oil and Gas recently contacted CNN to alert them of the gross errors in the GDAC advertisement they featured on their website. The company sent this letter pointing out just a handful of errors and asking for the video's removal. After multiple attempts to contact CNN no one at the network has returned Cabot's calls.

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